I. Introduction

In the years that I have been a German historian, I have been fascinated by how the »other« is manipulated in the process of nation-building. From the virulent anti-French polemics of Arndt and Jahn as well as other early German nationalists to the equally hostile Kulturkampf and the antisemitische Bewegung of the Kaiserreich, the »other« has functioned as a rallying point around which German nationalists gathered and against whom the German nation has often been defined. During the Nazi era, racial definitions of difference served as the defining feature of the Third Reich and the basis of its genocidal programs. In contemporary Germany, debates over dual citizenship and the revision of citizenship laws have heightened the acute Angst of some Germans for the »foreign other.« From the Napoleonic era to the present day, German nationalists have employed a range of outsiders, or others, to determine membership within the national community.

Although national ideologues vigorously attest to the essential quality of their communities, historians have long recognized that these imagined structures are crafted during the process of nation-building. This was especially true of the Kaiserreich. While the German Empire as created by Bismarck had all the trappings of a nation – fixed borders, a constitution and a common language, – it lacked all symbols of national unity. The Empire’s unofficial national day was the anniversary of the battle of Sedan, not the proclamation of the Reich. A national flag was not adopted until 1892, and Deutschland über alles did not become the national anthem until 1922.¹ Beyond the absence of external signifiers of national unity, the German Reich competed with a range of pre-unification forces for the loyalty of its citizens. Family, village, regional and religious allegiances challenged the formation of a cohesive national

identity. The fault lines that permeated Imperial Germany were deepened by the efforts to eliminate them. Never were they more apparent than during the Kulturkampf and the antisemitische Bewegung of the Gründerzeit.

In spite of the fundamentally different constellation of forces that perpetrated each campaign and their contrasting rationale, the Kulturkampf and the antisemitische Bewegung clearly fall under the rubric of nation-building. The Kulturkampf, according to Helmut W. Smith, was an »unsuccessful attempt to create a common national culture across confessional lines.« Catholics, most of whom were native to the German lands they called home, were forced to defend their positions within the newly constructed »Protestant« nation. The legislative assault of the 1870s and the Catholic response to it ultimately reshaped the German nation. The anti-Semitic campaigns of the same era can also be read as an effort to define the German nation in monolithic and religiously homogeneous terms. Racial categories of religion were employed to emphasize the antithetical relationship of Jews to the German nation. The political, social and cultural assault on the German Jewry was part and parcel of the German nationalist discourse. Yet, German nation-building was not a monolithic enterprise choreographed in Berlin and simultaneously staged throughout the empire. Rather, relationships between »insiders« and »outsiders,« as well as definitions of minorities and majorities, varied greatly according to context.

To illuminate how the process of German nation-building unfolded outside of Prussia, this essay turns to the southwestern state of Hesse-Darmstadt (Hesse), away from the Catholic dominated south and removed from Berlin where Jews resided in large numbers. Casting the Hessian Kulturkampf and antisemitische Bewegung in relief against the Prussian model reveals the challenges of nation-building at the local level.

2 Geoff Eley, »State Formation, Nationalism and Political Culture. Some Thoughts on the Unification of Germany,« in Id. (ed.), From Unification to Nazism. Reinterpreting the German Past (Boston, 1986), p. 73.
4 Although written before the term of nation-building was common, George Mosse’s work on the relationship between Jews and the German nation illuminates this phenomenon. For example see George Mosse, The Crisis of German Ideology. Intellectual Origins of the Third Reich (New York, 1964); and Id., Nationalism and Sexuality. Respectability and Abnormal Sexuality in Modern Europe (New York, 1985).
While the significant support garnered by each phenomenon within Hesse-Darmstadt attests to the resonance of national agendas beyond the confines of Berlin, the flexibility of Hessian officials when implementing »national policy« and the regime's official opposition to a racially defined national community illuminates the inherent tensions between local and national policy. Comparing the Kulturkampf and the antisemitische Bewegung can challenge accepted notions about the relationship of religious minorities to the German nation and test the »peculiarities« of the minority experience.

II. The Hessian Context

The history of an independent and politically significant Hessen began in the middle of the thirteenth century when the territory became a Reichsfürstentum, a principality within the Holy Roman Empire. Under the leadership of the Landgrave, Philip the Magnanimous (1518-67), Hesse joined forces with the Reformation and severed its official ties to Catholicism. The move toward Protestantism was reinforced by Philip's 1531 decision to join the Schmalkaldischen Bund's efforts against the Holy Roman Emperor, Karl V. In spite of the internecine quarrels between orthodox Lutherans and Pietists that played out in Hesse for more than a century, Catholic communities all but disappeared from the region until the seeds of religious toleration were sown during the eighteenth-century Enlightenment.

Hesse's political alliance with France following Napoleon's victories in the Rhineland and the subsequent dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire in 1806 produced great benefits. Its ruler, Ludwig X, incorporated the previously independent territories of Erbach, Friedberg, and other smaller principalities into his holdings, and Hesse was redesignated as a »Grand Duchy.« Accordingly, Ludwig X assumed a new title, Grand Duke Ludwig I. The change in nomenclature, however, came at a significant cost. Not only was Ludwig obligated to quarter 20,000 French troops in Hesse's southern regions, but Hessian troops were conscripted for the French campaigns against Prussia (1806/07), Spain (1808), Austria (1809) and Russia (1812). Only when the Grand Coalition defeated Napoleon at


When the participants of the Congress of Vienna (1814-15) redesigned the political map of Europe, Hesse-Darmstadt assumed geographic contours that remained relatively fixed until 1918.\footnote{There would be minor territorial adjustments after the German civil war of 1866. Demandt, Geschichte, pp. 561-5; Franz, "Großherzoglich Hessisch," pp. 183-9; and Dan S. White, The Splintered Party. National Liberalism in Hessen and the Reich, 1867-1918 (Cambridge, 1976), pp. 14-16.} The newly reconfigured Grand Duchy contained the politically modern region of Rhinehesse that had been ruled by France's revolutionary regime and the highly differentiated and traditional territories of the old provinces, Starkenburg and Oberhessen. Jewish presence within these areas can be traced back to the early years of the second millennium. Many were actively involved in the cattle and grain trade, two areas of economic enterprise that brought Jews into close and frequent contact with gentile farmers.\footnote{Two important studies about Jewish life in rural Germany are Monika Richarz, "Viehhandel und Landjuden im 19. Jahrhundert. Eine symbiotische Wirtschaftsbeziehung in Südwestdeutschland," Menora, Jahrbuch für deutsch-jüdische Geschichte, 1 (1990), pp. 66-88; and Id. and Reinhard Rüppel (eds.), Jüdisches Leben auf dem Lande (Tübingen, 1997).} In 1828, there were 21,039 Jews residing in Hesse, representing three percent of the total population.\footnote{Population figures for each confessional group are derived from Beiträge zur Statistik des Grossherzogthums Hessen, ed. by Grossherzoglichen Zentralstelle für Landesstatistik, 4, vol. 59 (Darmstadt, 1909), p. 37. These figures for the Jewish population are also found in Arthur Ruppin, Die Juden im Grossherzogtum Hessen. Im Auftrage der Groflöge für Deutschland U. O. Bnei Briss bearbeitet vom Bureau für Statistik der Juden (Berlin, 1909); and Uziel Schmelz, Die jüdische Bevölkerung Hessens. Von der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts bis 1933 (Tübingen, 1996).} Unlike Jews who were literally native to the three regions that comprised post-Napoleonic Hesse-Darmstadt, Catholic presence in Hesse significantly increased after the great secularization of 1803 when Church lands were incorporated into the territorial holdings of the Hessian Landgrave. What practically had been an exclusive Protestant region now contained a significant Catholic minority. In 1828, Hesse was home to 179,757 Catholics or twenty-six percent of the population.\footnote{Beiträge zur Statistik, p. 37. On the Catholic Church in Hesse and the Mainz Bishopric, see Kurze Geschichte des Bistums Mainz 1821-1984 (Mainz, 1984); and Carl Reidel, Die katholische Kirche in Grossherzogenthum Hessen. Die Gesetze für Kirche und Schule (Paderborn, 1904).}
In the decades prior to German unification, Hessian politics reflected the liberal demands and turbulent agenda of its day. The 1820 constitution established a bi-cameral parliament with an upper house filled by members of the hereditary aristocracy and also included the Bishop of Mainz, the newly created Lutheran prelate and the president of the University of Gießen. The lower house was comprised of six representatives selected from the land-owning nobility, ten of whom from cities in Hesse, and thirty-four »bureaucrats« who were elected to their positions through the three-tiered system that favored the moneyed elite. The popular disturbances of 1830 in Hesse-Darmstadt, which took their cue from the revolutionary uprisings in France, were suppressed by military force. In their wake, Ludwig I dissolved the *Landtag*, curtailed press freedoms and installed a reactionary regime led by Minister President du Thil, who remained in office until the outbreak of the 1848 revolutions. Once the counter-revolutionary forces had squelched efforts to unify Germany under the banner of liberalism, Reinhard von Dalwigk was appointed as both the interior and foreign minister and, for more than two decades, dominated Hessian politics.12

The volatile political currents of the era, from the granting of a Hessian constitution in 1820 to the establishment of the German Reich by Otto von Bismarck in 1871, were intricately linked to the dynamic demographic and economic developments that gripped Hesse. Between 1828 and 1871, the Hessian population increased from 686,783 to 852,009. There were 4,334 more Jews living in Hesse-Darmstadt in 1871 than there had been in 1828, and during the same period, the number of Catholics rose by an astonishing 59,327.13 This population growth was one factor that contributed to the rapid economic expansion during this era. Equally as important was Hesse’s decision in 1828 to join the *Zollverein*, the Prussian dominated customs union. Membership in the *Zollverein* provided greater income for the state, protection against foreign competition, and accelerated the process of industrialization. When an integrated railway network was completed in the 1860s, Hesse stood on the verge of becoming a highly industrialized region with large urban centers.14 It is against this backdrop that the *Kulturkampf* and *antisemitische Bewegung* unfolded in Hesse.

13 *Beiträge zur Statistik*, p. 37.
III. Reichsfeinde. The Catholic Other

The creation of a unified Germany in 1871 altered the relationship of Catholics living within the territorial boundaries of the Kaiserrreich to the new nation. Although German Catholics accepted the newly formed state from the beginning, demands for a »homogeneous national community« rendered the multiple allegiances of Catholics at odds with the German nation. The attempt to create a unified national culture founded on enlightened Protestantism manifested itself in the 1870s under the guise of the Kulturkampf, a legislative assault aimed squarely at the Catholic communities of the recently established Reich. This campaign, in the words of Wolfgang Altgeld, is best understood as a question of »which inheritance from pre-national cultures should be woven into the new national culture, which leitmotif should be stamped on it and which groups would therefore be privileged.« The supporters of this assault were found largely within the »liberal« camp of German politics, a diverse and constantly shifting collection of individuals ranging from Protestant Prussian nationalists, who wanted to give full expression to the kleindeutsch vision of the nation, to fully acculturated Jews who had transferred their religious allegiances to an ethic of Protestant Bildung. Unlike the »inconclusive« war with France, the liberal campaign against the Catholics was intended to complete the moral, social and cultural unification of Germany.

The Kulturkampf labeled German Catholics as Reichsfeinde, a specific category of the »other,« and it sought to curtail the Center Party’s political power. The 1867 school laws in Baden, the Prussian Law of March 1872 and comparable legislation in other German states mandated state supervision of public and private schools. The Reichsgesetz of July 1872, prohibited new Jesuit institutions in Germany from opening, dissolved those in existence, restricted where Jesuit priests could reside, and gave local authorities the right to expel individual priests for »subversive« activities. The May Laws of 1873 made attendance at a German Gymnasium and the successful completion of courses in philosophy, history, and German literature pre-requisites for ordination as a priest or minister. Laws passed in May 1874 sanctioned civil marriages and allowed the state to expel all practicing clerics who had yet to satisfy the newly legislated state

15 Wolfgang Altgeld, »German Catholics,« p. 114. See also Smith, German Nationalism, p. 20; and Stephan Wendehorst, »Emancipation as Path to National Integration,« in Rainer Liedtke and Id. (eds.), The Emancipation of Catholics, Jews and Protestants, pp. 188-201.

requirements. When the Prussian episcopate refused to adhere to the recent legislation and a 1875 papal encyclical declared the laws against the Catholic Church to be null and void, open conflict ensued between Catholics and the German nation.17

The Hessian Kulturkampf legislation largely mirrored the Prussian model. The Jesuit order was banned from the Grand Duchy in 1872, »the school« laws were passed two years later; and in April 1875, the state affirmed its authority over the Church in the area of education by claiming its right to appoint Catholic clergy.18 The move against the Jesuits forced numerous priests into exile and left many parishes without a spiritual leader. The situation was exacerbated when recalcitrant priests were jailed and the regime refused to fill vacant parishes with clerics who had not completed the required course of study stipulated by the May Laws of 1873. Two years after the legislative assault began, six percent of parishes in the Mainz diocese were without priests. By 1885, 25 percent of all Catholic parishes in Hesse had pastoral vacancies.19 As difficult as this situation was for Hesse’s Catholic communities, the deleterious impact of Kulturkampf legislation on Catholic schools was even greater.

The school laws in Hesse, like those enacted throughout the Reich, were the cornerstones of the nation-building project engineered by German liberals. A national educational system, according to Marjorie Lamberti, was designed to cultivate patriotism, shared political loyalties and »establish the primacy of the relationship of the citizen to the state.«20 In essence, schools were understood as the bonding agent of the national community. In Hesse, the liberal bureaucrat and chief minister of the government, Karl Hoffman, joined together with the Hessian Diet to

17 Margaret Anderson demonstrates the difficulties of dating the Kulturkampf and looks to the »heightened popular hostility to Catholics« following the Prussian victory over Austria as a plausible starting point for the Kulturkampf. It is not my desire at this time to enter into the historiographical debate regarding the Kulturkampf, but rather to demonstrate how this legislation positioned Catholics as »Others.« Anderson’s argument is found in, »The Kulturkampf and the Course of German History,« Central European History, 19 (1986), pp. 82-115. Good overviews of the Kulturkampf are Gerhard Besier, Kirche, Politik und Gesellschaft im 19. Jahrhundert (Munich, 1998), pp. 21-6; and Rudolf Morsey, »The Kulturkampf,« in Anton Rauscher (ed.), Der soziale und politische Katholizismus. Entwicklungslinien in Deutschland 1803-1963, 2 vols. (Munich and Vienna, 1982), pp. 76-8.

18 White, The Splintered Party, p. 34.

19 Paul Leopold Haffner, Die Lage der katholischen Kirche in Großherzogthum Hessen (Mainz, 1885), pp. 43-7.

reform the educational system. The first blow was delivered in 1874 when Hoffman secured the passage of a law that established non-denominational schools for parents who did not want their children to be educated by clerics. Although Hoffman and his allies hoped for a complete separation of church and state, the compromise legislation secured the support of Hesse's upper house, a body still controlled by conservative forces.\textsuperscript{21}

When the School Laws of 1874 were reinforced by the »April laws« in the following spring, more extensive inroads were made into the confessional character of schools in Hesse-Darmstadt. Under the old system, which had been in effect since 1832, clerics served as directors of local and state school boards. The new laws removed pastors and priests from their schoolboard positions, reduced religious instruction from six to four hours per week, and stipulated that religious instruction was no longer to be the exclusive purview of the clergy. In theory, formal religious instruction was eliminated from the curriculum; a change that meant Catholic school children had to prepare for their first communion and other sacraments after school hours.\textsuperscript{22}

At first glance, and in the eyes of contemporary Catholics, the new laws appeared to mark the end of confessionally delineated community schools. Throughout Hesse, Catholic and Protestant Volkschulen were replaced with non-denominational Kommunalschulen and inter-denominational Simultanschulen. In the Protestant-dominated city of Darmstadt, the Catholic Volksschule closed its doors in 1877 after 73 years of operation. Its four hundred school children were then transferred to the recently opened Kommunalschule which was created out of the former Protestant Volksschule. Not far from Frankfurt, in the town of Bürgel, local officials established a Simultanschule, the founding charter of which stipulated that the confessional composition of its teachers be proportional to the number of children belonging to each religious group. When the school first opened in 1877, it had three Catholic teachers, one Protestant teacher and one Jewish teacher.\textsuperscript{23} By the end of the 1880s, primary schools in Hesse were no longer exclusively confessional.

Nevertheless, Kulturkampf legislation in Hesse did not mark the end of publicly funded Catholic education. While it is clear that non-denom-

\textsuperscript{21} White, Splintered Party, pp. 30-4.

\textsuperscript{22} Der Kulturkampf in Hessen (Gau-Algesheim, no date), pp. 29-35. An 1874 lesson plan can be found in Kirchliches Amtsblatt für die Diözese Mainz XVII, 11 (November 10, 1875).

inational and inter-denominational schools emerged in urban settings and in areas of the Catholic diaspora where it was not possible to maintain \textit{Volksschule} enrollments above thirty students, the minimum number necessary in order to receive public funding, they did not eliminate Catholic \textit{Volksschulen}. In predominantly Catholic communities, such as Gau Algesheim, Bingen and others scattered throughout Rheinhesse, schools remained Catholic.\footnote{Haffner, \textit{Die Lage}, pp. 67-72; Karl Helm and Christoferm Hermann, \textit{Pfarrer Peter Koser und die Zeit des Kulturkampfes} (Gau-Algesheim, 1983), pp. 96-8; and Sigrid Duchhardt-Bösken, \textit{Die Pfarrei im 19. Jahrhundert,} in Helmut Mathy (ed.), \textit{Bingen. Geschichte einer Stadt am Mittelrhein. Vom frühen Mittelalter bis zum 19. Jahrhundert} (Mainz, 1989), pp. 452-70.} Even in areas where \textit{Kommunalshulen} and \textit{Simultanschulen} emerged, a number of schools retained a distinctive confessional character in spite of their charters. In the town of Gernsheim, the local \textit{Simultanschule} was sufficiently Catholic for the future priest, Georg Lenhart, to enroll in after having spent a number of years as a student in the Catholic \textit{Volksschule}. According to Lenhart, not only was the \textit{Simultanschule} staffed with Catholic teachers and \textit{»well-trained theologians\textit{»} who prepared him for his future studies, but his last year at the \textit{Simultanschule} was entirely given over to preparing for his first communion.\footnote{Ludwig Lenhart (ed.), \textit{Reminiscor Miserationum Tuarum Domine. Kramereien in einem bescheidenen Priesterleben. Auf Drängen der Freunde vorgenommen von Professor Georg Lenhart, Domkapitular} (Mainz, 1951).} In locations such as Mainz, where the \textit{Kommunalshule} operated in addition to denominational schools, the non-denominational institution came under fierce attack by Catholic loyalists for failing to provide a proper religious education and for promoting \textit{»nationalism, atheism and materialism.\textit{»}}\footnote{Haffner, \textit{Die Lage}, pp. 33-43.} The regional focus on the \textit{Kulturkampf} in Hesse also illuminates an element of governmental flexibility that did not exist in Prussia. In spite of legislation to the contrary, Hessian authorities allowed the Catholic clergy to continue teaching at the \textit{Gymnasien} in Mainz, Worms and Bensheim as well as at the \textit{Realschulen} in Mainz and Bingen.\footnote{Die \textit{Communalshule} in ihrem Wesen und in ihren Früchten. Allen christlichen Eltern und Freunden der Jugend in ihrem wahren gezeichnet nach den Erfahrungen in den \textit{Mainzer Schulen} (Mainz, 1879).} The unambiguous portrayal of the \textit{Kulturkampf} one reads in German histories that take a Berlin-centered perspective assumes greater clarity and nuance when re-situated into a local context. The project of nation-building was not a monolithic enterprise manipulated by Prussian bureaucrats, nor was it evenly imposed throughout Germany. Tensions inherent in this process
come into sharper focus when examined away from the nexus of national power. The same is true for the phenomenon of anti-Semitism during the Kaiserreich.

IV. The Internal Jewish Other

Although the campaign against German Jews never assumed the legislative format of the Kulturkampf, it clearly positioned the recently emancipated Jewish population as the »internal other,« an entity designated as foreign to the German national community. In only a few short years after the creating of the German Reich, Jewish membership within the nation was challenged. The Court Chaplain Adolph Stöcker sought to prevent the »Judaization of the German spirit« by limiting the number of Jewish judges appointed to the bench and barring Jewish teachers from »German« schools. Stöcker’s most venomous attacks were reserved for »modern Jewry,« a nebulous code word for the segment of German Jewry allegedly responsible for undermining the Christian-Germanic state.28 The Berlin-centered anti-Semitic movement increased its standing among German nationalists when the well-known historian and political theorist Heinrich von Treitschke chastised Jews for clinging to vestiges of their religious heritage. Unlike Stöcker who believed that converted Jews could join the national community, Treitschke claimed that the Jews of Germany, especially the Ostjuden, were alien to the »German national character,« and hence, unassimilable.29

In spite of Treitschke’s former membership in the Liberal Party, his interpretation of the German national spirit did not allow for non-Christian elements to be incorporated into German society. Treitschke’s views of religious toleration, as presented both in his essay on the German Jewry


and his earlier works on German history, only made allowances for Christian denominations. His understanding of Christianity, however, was imbued with racial conceptions that prevented Jews, even if they converted, from becoming Germans. For Treitschke and other racial anti-Semites, the terms »Christian« and »Jewish« functioned as dialectical code words, with the former used to demarcate the Jew as an »other,« or alien component of German society, while the latter symbolized every negative aspect of German life. It was this brand of anti-Semitism that informed the political phenomenon first appearing in Berlin in 1879 and later spreading to Hesse.

Under the leadership of the romantic populist Otto Böckel, political anti-Semitism became a formidable force in the Hessian borderlands during the 1880s. Taking his cue from Berlin, Böckel penned the immensely popular anti-Semitic pamphlet, Die Juden, die Könige unserer Zeit (»The Jews, the Kings of our Time«), which characterized Jews as »urban, rootless, unproductive, and inimical to German well-being.« In contra-distinction to the urban character of Jews, Böckel located the essence of the German national character in rural Germany, where peasant farmers tilled the soil and served as the nation's repository of courage and common sense. In the months leading up to the 1887 Reichstag elections, Böckel delivered hundreds of stump speeches in which he repeatedly depicted the »Jews« as the agents of modernity and antithetical to the German nation. Böckel's overwhelming victory is testimony to the fact that the rural populace within the Marburg electoral district enthusiastically supported his message.

Although the political movement of Otto Böckel originated in the Prussian portion of Hesse to the north of the Grand Duchy, it also attracted a significant following in Hesse-Darmstadt. The precise economic conditions – agricultural depression, industrialization and increasing peasant indebtedness – that fostered the growth of Böckel's political anti-Semitism in Hesse-Kassel were also present within portions of the Grand Duchy. Böckel successfully manipulated anti-Jewish sentiment among farmers, whose livelihoods were dependent on Jewish cattle dealers and middlemen, to elect anti-Semitic candidates to both local and national legislative assemblies. The electoral success of the Böckel movement in

32 Rüdiger Mack, » Otto Böckel und die antisemitische Bauernbewegung in Hessen 1887-1894,« in Kommission für die Geschichte der Juden in Hessen (ed.), Neun-
the northern environs of rural Hesse, combined with the deteriorating economic situation, accelerated the process of Jewish migration from the countryside into Germany’s more urban settings. In the Oberhessian town of Bad Nauheim, for example, the Jewish population more than doubled, from 53 residents in 1871 to 119 in 1900. The influx of Jews into Bad Nauheim came at the expense of the nearby rural Jewish community of Steinfurt. As the number of Jews living in Steinfurt diminished, the community was forced to dissolve in the early part of the twentieth century.\textsuperscript{33} The urbanization of the German Jewry in Hesse was motivated in part by the victories of rural anti-Semitic candidates.

Just as the \textit{Kulturkampf} comes into sharper relief when viewed through a local prism, so too does anti-Semitism. Unlike the Berlin-centered anti-Semitic movement that defined the German national community in opposition to Jewish foreignness, the Böckel phenomenon also had an anti-Prussian component to its political agenda. Philipp Köhler, a member of the Hessian state parliament and Böckel’s peasant protégé, voiced this sentiment in the following manner:

Prussia has practiced all manner of chicanery on us […]. We are not treated like German brothers, but according to the old Prussian principle, […]. »We all wish to be good Germans, but first we must become pure Prussian!«\textsuperscript{34}

Not only had the Hessian regime in Darmstadt, many of whom were veteran \textit{Kulturkämpfer}, introduced »Prussian militarism« into the local culture, it had also sacrificed the economic interests of Hessian peasants to the needs of East Elban landowners.\textsuperscript{35} This anti-Prussian sentiment is best captured by Böckel’s often used slogan, »gegen Junker und Juden« (against Junkers and Jews). To Böckel’s and Köhler’s followers, Jews and Prussians were demarcated as antithetical to the well-being of the community. In this regard, pre-unification regional loyalties were at odds with the creation of a supra-national community.

\textsuperscript{33} Stephan Kolb, \textit{Die Geschichte der Bad Nauheimer Juden. Eine gescheiterte Assimilation} (Bad Nauheim, 1987).
\textsuperscript{34} Quoted in Levy, \textit{The Downfall}, p. 57.
\textsuperscript{35} Ibid., p. 58.
The regional focus also reveals forces that stood in stark contrast to those of the antisemitische Bewegung. Concerned over the involvement of government officials in the Böckel movement, the liberal Hessian regime in Darmstadt issued a stern warning to its ministers against participating in such reprehensible activities. The Landgrave expected his officials to represent Jewish citizens in precisely the same manner as they would represent members of other confessions, and governmental workers were threatened with disciplinary action if they failed to heed the regime’s wishes. Moreover, the electoral success of the Böckel phenomenon occurred primarily in rural, Protestant regions. Having migrated south from Hesse-Kassel to Oberhessen and then into rural Starkenburg, the movement never garnered significant support in Rheinhesse, a region containing a number of large Catholic communities. In fact, voters in Alzey-Bingen—consistently elected the Jewish liberal politician Ludwig Bamberger to the Reichstag, making him the only Jewish member of the Reichstag not affiliated with the Social Democratic Party at the time the anti-Semitic movement took off in the early 1890s. Böckel’s public ex-corision of Bamberger for supporting »liberal measures that were pernicious to peasant well-being,« the Reichsbank and the gold standard for German currency, could not erode public confidence in Bamberger. His broad-based support kept him in the Reichstag for almost two decades.

V. Conclusion

The relationship between religion and the nation during the Kaiserreich was exceedingly complex, especially for Jews who received conflicting evidence about their position within the German national community. Bamberger’s popularity in Alzey-Bingen, an electoral district comprised of 37,151 Protestants (55 percent), 27,484 Catholics (41 percent) and 2355 Jews (3.5 percent), suggests that religious affiliation alone did not predetermine politics during the Kaiserreich. In spite of his unambiguous support for the Kulturkampf and the steady opposition of the local

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36 This government document was issued on October 22, 1892 by Hessen’s Minister of Interior and Justice. It is found in the Hessisches Staatsarchiv, R 12 F 9/37.
37 Dieter Hoffmann, Zur Geschichte der Alzeyer Juden (Alzey, 1988); Levy, The Downfall, p. 58; and Toury, Antisemitismus, p. 182.
38 These numbers are based on the combined 1871 figures for the districts of Alzey and Bingen and are found in Beiträge zur Statistik der Großherzogtums Hessen (Darmstadt, 1909), p. 33.
Catholic press to his candidacy, Bamberger was supported by Jews, Protestants and Catholics alike. Indeed, his electoral victories of 1881 and 1887 were largely dependent on the Center Party which "campaigned like hell" for him and the thousands of Catholics who voted for Bamberger. While religion often informed one's choice of elementary schools and social coteries, it did not necessarily dictate one's political loyalties at the local level. Apparently, rational self-interest reflected in the choice of political candidates could, under certain conditions, override Germany's deep religious divide.

Such positive indicators of Jewish acceptance were countered by strong support for anti-Semitism in parts of Oberhessen and in Starkenburg's rural environs where Otto Böckel enjoyed immense popularity. The seemingly paradoxical presence of the German Jewry can be explained by the specific relationship of Jews to the German nation which was conditioned by time and place. In the northern regions of Hesse-Darmstadt during the 1880s and 1890s, Böckel and his followers held to an exclusive vision of the national community that was both anti-Jewish and anti-Prussian. In Alzey-Bingen and other areas in which liberal traditions still held sway, an inclusive model was crafted. The conflicting situation resulted in the Jews being both native and foreign at the same time. They belonged to the German nation, but not unconditionally at all times or everywhere.

The relationship of Catholics to the newly created German Reich has similarities to that of the Jews. Although the Kulturkampf legislation enjoyed widespread support among Protestant and Jewish liberal politicians who sought to construct a homogeneous national culture, the Kulturkampf produced the opposite effect as desired by its architects. The Reichstag elections of 1881 yielded the Catholic Center Party 23.8 percent of the total vote and signaled the arrival of the party as a major player in German politics. Not only did the labeling of Catholics as Reichsfeinde fail to diminish Catholic participation in German society, but in many ways it facilitated Catholic integration into the nation.


40 On the critical importance of "place" for the creation of cultural knowledge, see Hillel J. Kieval, "The Importance of Place. Comparative Aspects of the Ritual Murder Trial in Modern Central Europe," in Todd M. Endelman (ed.), Comparing Jewish Societies (Ann Arbor, 1997), pp. 135-66.
Living in Germany, a nation with a Protestant «high culture,» required both Catholics and Jews to negotiate the terrain between their respective religious identities and the dominant Protestant culture.41 For Jews, this meant a contested, but gradual process of acculturation that enabled them to move out of the «ghetto» and into an emerging civic society. Accommodations in religious ritual and diet coupled with their enthusiastic embrace of the liberal-nationalist version of German culture facilitated the emancipation of German Jewry. Catholics, on the other hand, did not readily alter the contours of their confessional identities to conform to the demands of the Protestant high culture. Instead, German Catholics crafted a national identity that was in opposition to the one wholeheartedly supported by most German Jews. The malleability of the symbolic nation, however, enabled the Catholic minority to secure its place within the national community precisely at the moment when Jewish membership became increasingly suspect.

Ultimately, two fundamental differences between the Catholic and Jewish minorities affected their relationship to the national community, one quantitative and the other qualitative. The sheer size of the Catholic community enabled it to exert a determinant political influence that gradually informed the development of national culture in a way that was simply not available to the much smaller Jewish minority. Once the politics of liberalism ceased to play a significant role in nation-building, the positions of Jews and Catholics within the nation were largely reversed. Jews found themselves stigmatized as foreign, while Catholics were reluctantly welcomed into the nation. This political transition was assisted by the two religious minorities’ relationship to Christianity. Although Protestants and Catholics had been bitter enemies for centuries and remained highly suspicious of one another throughout the Kaiserreich, the two groups shared common symbols of meaning. From Jesus as the Messiah to the celebration of religious holidays, many symbols employed by Catholics and Protestants to orientate themselves in their day-to-day lives were mutually intelligible. Jews and Christians, however, mark time and place in fundamentally different ways. The symbols of Judaism, from a

41 Ernest Gellner writes, «Nationalism is, essentially, the general imposition of high culture on society, where previously low cultures had taken up the lives of the majority, and in some cases of the totality, of the population.» Id. Nations and Nationalism (New York and London, 1983), pp. 48-9, pp. 55-62. David Blackbourn states that in the minds of most middle-class Protestants, «German culture was Protestant,» in The Long Nineteenth Century. A History of Germany, 1780-1918 (New York, 1998), p. 293.
Saturday Sabbath to the prayers intoned for the expectation of the messianic age, remained intractably foreign to Christians.

In the final analysis, the absence of shared symbolism between Jews and Christians complicated the membership of the Jewish minority in a national community defined in Christian-Germanic terms. A nation that draws upon religious symbolism to define its existence, excludes, by definition, individuals who do not share the same signifiers of meaning.